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Is Ferguson the American Spring? *Another Long Hot Summer*

by JOHN HALLE

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Some on the left are viewing the Ferguson uprising as the the long awaited American Spring in which resistance to the routine murder of black youth becomes the wedge cracking open the a system revealing itself to be rotten to the core.

It may become that. What happened to Michael Brown was all too typical and while his life was cut short by real bullets, so too does an entire generation see its prospects figuratively murdered as Wall Street consigns it to a future of permanent debt slavery abetted by militarized police forces crushing any attempts at mobilizing in opposition to it.

If a movement can connect the dots then it has a chance to galvanize a movement of the 99% back into the streets.

But there will be a lot of opposition and much of it will come from those who Brittany Cooper referred to as "figureheads of the movement" now claiming to speak for Michael Brown and the Ferguson protesters. Among those having shown themselves as "friends of those with political power rather than fighters for real change" has been Reverend Al Sharpton who, according to Cooper, presided over the Brown funeral by

“stick(ing) to safe truths, convenient ones, about the problem of militarized policing, particularly in black communities. Sharpton chose not to be a prophetic voice for the people of Ferguson but rather to do the work that the Obama administration sent him to do. That work entailed the placating of the people by ostensibly affirming their sense of injustice, while disaffirming their right to a kind of righteous rage in the face of such injustice.”

More troubling was Sharpton’s appearance at the funeral for Eric Garner the day before where, according to Byron York in the Washington Examiner, pro forma criticisms of the NYPD functioned as an introduction to hectoring his audience with the “bootstraps” line associated with Bill Cosby and Sharpton’s increasingly close confident President Obama.

“We’ve got to be straight up in our community, too,” he said. “We have to be outraged at a 9-year-old girl killed in Chicago. We have got to be outraged by our disrespect for each other, our disregard for each other, our killing and shooting and running around gun-toting each other, so that they’re justified in trying to come at us because some of us act like the definition of blackness is how low you can go.”

Many in the audience were “enraged, among them Eddie S. Glaude Jr., professor of religion and African-American studies at Princeton who “found the middle part of the eulogy profoundly disturbing.”

What remains to be seen is whether a new generation of black leaders will be able to step forward and not only give voice to this rage, but, to make strategic alliances with the 99% out in the streets two years before, and who were brutally suppressed creating a war zone in lower Manhattan which bore striking similarities to the that seen recently in Ferguson.

Should they do so, they will be sure to confront the full force of political and financial elites and their first lines of defense in the uniformed services.

When this potential was most actively present, nearly a half century ago, Richard Nixon and J. Edgar Hoover made their names in infamy.

That role is sure to be adopted by Obama and Holder, who will assume the same role in blackface.

That black faces in high places now are fully capable of doing the work of elites up to and including smashing the faces of those who dare to challenge it has long since become obvious. Ferguson, a relic of Jim Crow in its apartheid white governance of a black majority is a distraction from this reality.

The movement will need to look beyond this superficial difference and see the naked fist which revealed itself in Ferguson and Zuccotti Park as the same one.

If it learns to do so, then we can look forward to the American Spring and many desperately needed long hot summers to follow.

